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ABSTRACT

The effects of a "school within a school" on the academic achievement of high school sophomores were studied in a Chicago (Illinois) inner-city public school, the Tilden Community Academy and its Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) program (school within the school). Of the 228 tenth graders, 49 were enrolled in the JROTC program and 179 were not. Thirty students were selected from each group, and their scores on the Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP) were compared. No significant differences were seen in student mathematics and reading TAP scores in 1994 or 1995. The school within a school in this instance appears to have no effect on mathematics and reading achievement. (Contains one table and nine references.) (SLD)

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The Effects of School Within A School on the Academic Achievement of Sophomore Students.

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The Effects of School Within A School on the Academic Achievement of Sophomore Students.

Norman E. Hawkins, Jr.

The purpose of the study is to present the effect of a school within a school in a major urban city. The study will be limited to an analysis of the data to the development of a school within a school environment because this concept was developed inconjunction with the Department of Defense and the Department of Education to assist inner-city schools to improve their academic achievement. This study will involve Tilden Community Academy and its JROTC program.

Given the proper information, educators can make proper decisions about investing in this type of instructional technology. The decisions educators and administrators make now involving small schools or school within a school will have far-reaching effects upon our students' education now and the twenty-first century.

The history of education is, a story of gradual evolution and growth; but education has its revolution. Everyday educator is trying to find some learning pedagogy to enhance our youth to develop a sense for academic achievement. Today's youth has a lot more problems in accepting or focusing on academic achievement. any of our students face the ordeal of being a single parent, the lack of discipline, raising themselves to become adults, and not wanting to achieve in an academic environment. The student in the urban environment faces the turmoil everyday. Trying to meet the challenge to achieve thus is very difficult.

Educators today, have looked for ways to motivate students to improve their academic achievement. One of these was the "school with in a school." In working the confines of a classroom environment, students received the capability to work and had an opportunity to achieve.

Howley (1994) generally defined school within a school andfound a negative relationship between school or district size and student achievement. When all else was held equal (particularly community or individual socioeconomic status), comparisons of schools and districts based on differences in enrollment generally favored smaller units. A recent study found that small elementary schools benefited disadvantage students most (by weakening the negative influence of background characteristics). A study of higher-order thinking skills found no significant differences in the performance of students in small rural high schools and those in larger high schools in more urbanized areas. Small school size was also associated with lower high school dropout rates. In spite of the apparent benefits of small school size for adolescent policymakers still employed a powerful rationale to justify the continued creation of larger high schools. The charge was made that the smaller high

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schools could not provide a curriculum with adequate breadth and depth to meet students' diverse needs. Yet evidence suggested that a total enrollment of 400 students was actually sufficient to allow high school to provide an adequate curriculum. In addition, research on grade-span configuration showed that eight-grade students achieved best in elementary K-8 setting. If restructuring truly aim of school reform, then the scale of schooling was a major structural issue. Making the institution of schooling more responsive to students required a shift in metaphor from school as organization, where bureaucratic thinking inhabits true learning, to school as community, where learning was "nurtured" or "cultivated."

Gordon (1992) on the other hand focused on programs evaluation. As part of the program, students who are not being successful in school, teachers work with reduced class size to make personal connection with students. Counselors intensify human connection with these students. Referrals to programs and community agencies and small group counseling with forces interfers with their success in school. Students perceive the "school with in a school" program positively, with an average of 88% responding favorably in attitude surveys since 1989. Students performance objectives between 1989 and 1992 demonstrated positive growth for "school with in a school." Students progressed towards graduation and attendance and were lower dropout rates. To determine long-term effects, evaluation must be planned to continue beyond grade 10. Cost estimates provide for expanding program services, including teacher training, and increasing the number of students served.

McCollum (1994) in her research examined six school reform models for at-risk youth. Part 1 examines three curriculum-based reform programs that explicitly targeted curriculum and instruction: Reading Recovery; Success for All; and the Academy model. These programs focused on changes in student achievement and work within the structure of existing schools. Part 2 describes programs that attempted to reorganize the traditional school structure. The Accelerated School Model, Comer schools, and school-based management projects were examples of governance-based reforms. Individual chapters described program adoption, design, implementation, and results. Data were derived from (1) site observation of and interviews conducted at both the original and replication site fir each model: (2) document analysis. Findings indicated that successful reform required time and money; almost all programs conferred increase decision making on teachers; and programs that were broader in scope and required implementation based on context. Curriculum-based reform demonstrated more predictable and immediate impacts on students learning and depended on individual teachers' skills and proficient management.

Governance-based reform had goals that were long-range and constantly changing and rely sustained leadership and teacher commitment. Finally, regardless of the type of reform selected, greater professional opportunities with the teachers.

Shavelson (1994) pointed out that performance assessment were cast within a sampling framework. A performance assessment score was viewed as a sample of students performance drawn from a complex universe defined by a combination of all possible tasks, occasions, raters, and measurement methods. Using generalizability theory, the author's present evidence bearing generalizability (reliability) and convergent validity of performance assessments sampled from a rang of measurements facets, measurement methods, and data base. Results at both the individual and school level indicated that rater-sampling variability was not an issue: rater (e.g. teachers, job incumbents) can be trained to consistently judge performance on complex tasks. Rather, task-sampling variability is the major source of measurement error. Large numbers of tasks were needed to reliable measure of mathematics and science achievement at the elementary level, or to get reliable measure of job performance in the military. With respect to convergent validity, results suggested that methods do not converge. Performance scores, then were dependent on both the task and method sampled.

Rasinski (1992) study was a fourth follow-up of the sophomore cohort of the High School and beyond HSB) study in 1992. It described the development and testing of data collection system. The HSB in 1992 was the fifth wave of longitudinal study of the high school sophomore class of 1980. The longitudinal dataset was extremely rich, and contained past education, labor force activity, demographics, and attitudinal information obtained from the sophomores themselves and from school transcripts, school and administrators, and in some cases, sample members' parents. The fourth follow-up include respondents' accounts of their life events since the last round of data in 1986. Academic transcripts was also obtained for those who attended postsecondary education. From this research Rasnski found out three-fourth of the sophomore cohort achieved better in a small classroom setting which resulted in their achievement after high school.

Lee (1994) wrote that school restructuring continues to be a common approach to improving education. Despite restructuting's continued and growing support, there was little research to support its effectiveness. The theoretical contrast exposed in school restructuring was between bureaucratic and organic organizational forms. A study assessed the effect of restructuring on students during early high school years. Dates were used from the first two waves of the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 with a nationally representative sample of 11,794 high school sophomore in 820 secondary schools. Restructuring effects were evaluated on gains in students' engagement and achievement in mathematics, reading, social studies and science between grades 8 and 10, as well as the social distribution of the gains. Schools were categorized as restructured, moderate, or traditional based on 30 structural measures. Restructured high schools and unrestructured schools were contrasted with traditional reformed school.

High school size was an important structural feature. Results showed that students' achievement were significantly higher in restructured schools and lower in unrestructured

schools. Achievement and engagement gains were also equitably distributed in restructured schools. In results smaller schools had higher and more equitable engagement and achievement than those were in unrestructured schools.

As of results of Chelimsky (1993) report to the House Committee on Education and Labor, Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education conducted studies on the extent and cost of testing in the United States, the experience of Canada in testing , and initial efforts to set standards for judging student performance on the National Assessment Educational Program (NAEP). The main findings and conclusions from the first two studies were presented . A survey of all states and a national sample of school districts suggested that U.S. students did not seem to be overtested, spending about seven hours in testing (including preparation and related activities). A national performance test could be expected to cost $330 million.

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) implemented the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) at the beginning of the 1994-95 school-year at Worthing High School. The career-oriented program operated as "school with in a school" program accepting students throughout the district. A total of 59 ninth grade students were enrolled in the program at the beginning of the 1994-95 school year, with 54 remaining in the program at the end of the year. A high percentage of students passed their fall semester course than did a comparison group of students, especially in mathematics. The group grade point average Career Academy students over four core courses (English, mathematics, science, and social studies) was 94.2 in comparison of other JROTC students grade point average of 77.5. Furthermore, 85% of the comparison group of students failed one or more courses due to excessive absences while 15% of the Career Academy students failed one or more courses for that reason. Most of the students (94%) agreed that the Career Academy was teaching them the skills that will help them get a job or go to college when they graduate from high school.

Literature on research relating to effect of "school within a school" and academic achievement seemed adequate. The available literature seemed to suggest "school within a school" was on the rise. The literature also seemed to suggest that in many instances, "school within a school" did not increase or decrease the achievement level of the students. The literature suggested that, in most cases, the motivational level of students was increased and the attitude towards school improved.

The findings indicated that "school with in a school" has an important role to plan in the future of education, but the exact nature of the role has to be explored. Further research definitely needs to be done in this area.

Procedures

Population/Sampling

The population of this study includes 228 tenth grade students. The students attend Tilden Community Academy Public School which is located in a predominately-low-middle-middle socio-economic neighborhood.

From the 228 tenth grade students records showed 49 students enrolled "school with in a school" and 179 students were not enrolled in the "school with in a school" program. There will be 30 students from each sub-population were selected.

Each spring the Test of Achievement and Proficiency(TAP) are administered to each student in Chicago Public School. The mathematics and reading results of the TAP were administered during spring of 1995 school year will be used in this study. The TAP scores of the two samples were compared.

Test of Proficiency Test edition , level 15-18, Form K. The with in grade Kuder-Richardson twenty reliabilities for five subtest and total scores are high, generally greater than .85, with many exceeding .90. The K-R twenty reliability of the composition score for each level of the test exceed is .98. The intercorrelation as between subtests are lower than correlations between total scores, with former ranging from the .50 to mid .70 with most in the .65 area, and the latter being in .70 to .85 range. Approximately 35 to 50 percent of the variance between any two subtests is shared. The variance between any two of the vocabulary, reading, science, mathematics, and social studies total score is shared in the 50 to 70 percent range.

Findings

The findings will be tabulated in term of mean and standard deviations. The t test will be employed at the .05 level of confidence to determine if there is any statistically significant differences between the mean scores.

Table I

Means, Standard Deviation, and t Tests for the Experimental Group and Control Group for Reading and Mathematics Achievement Scores

Reading

Test	Experimental	Control	t
	N = 30	N = 30	
Posttest			
M	8.2	8.0	2.0
SD	1.94	1.60	

Mathematics

Test	Experimental	Control	t
	N =30	N =30	
Posttest			
M	9.1	8.6	2.0
SD	1.47	1.30	

df = 48 p > .05

*Significant at the .05 level

The purpose of this study was to assess the advantages or disadvantages to in corporate a school with in a school with in the main stream of the school population . Also to see if smaller classroom size will improve on the academic achievement of the students involve. However, the difference between the two groups showed no significant increase in the students math and reading scores.

Examination of the 1995 mean posttest scores indicated that the Experimental group and the Control group were not significantly different at the offset: the E-group with a mean of 8.2 and 9.1 in reading and mathematics; and the C-group with a mean of 8.0 and 8.6 in reading and mathematics. This finding and other information about the E-group and the C-group which is present (see Table 1) permits the conclusion that the two groups were both equivalent in reading and mathematics achievement in the Spring of 1995.

Further examination of the 1995 mean posttest scores reveals one year exposure to the school with in a school and the sophomore class, the C-group mean in reading and mathematics are 8.0 and 8.6, while the E-group mean are 8.2 and 9.1, respectively. Thus, there is no satirically significant increase or decrease in reading or mathematics achievement of the E-group or C-group.

The t score for the 1994 results (1.960) and 1995 (2.000) show no significant change in reading for the two groups. Likewise, the t score 1994 results (1.980) and 1995 results (1.960) show no significant changes in mathematics for the two groups.

Overall, the data leads to the acceptance of the null hypothesis: the school with in a school students will not differ on mathematics and reading achievement scores than those students taught in regular classrooms.

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